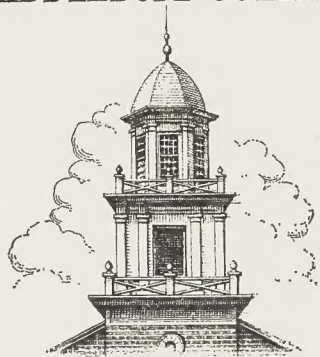


BREAD LOAF  
SCHOOL  
OF  
ENGLISH

1856-57-58



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# BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

## PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1956

All matters relative to your room and board, mail, and any charges you may incur (apart from the regular bill for tuition, board and room) should be referred to Mr. Donovan, Resident Manager, at the INN DESK.

For details regarding the management of the School, please make inquiry at the DIRECTOR'S OFFICE. All matters pertaining to your initial registration and payment of bills, information about courses, lectures, and graduate credit should be referred to the SECRETARY'S OFFICE. Director R. L. Cook and Miss Lillian Becker, Secretary, are the staff to whom you should bring your request for information about details of the School.

### REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Students should obtain confirmation of their courses from the Secretary's Office as soon after arrival at Bread Loaf as possible. Students who have not completed registration of courses in advance must personally consult with the Director. Appointments may be made with Miss Becker.

Registration is not completed until a registration card and a "notify in case of accident" card have been returned to the Secretary's Office. Please be sure to fill in the registration card on both sides.

A representative of the College Treasurer's Office will be in the Blue Parlor on Wednesday, June 29. It is requested that all bills which have not been paid be attended to at this time. Receipts for bills paid in advance may be obtained from the Treasurer at this time.

Please keep in mind the fact that if you wish to change your status from that of a non-credit student to that of a credit student or vice versa in any course, this change must be made on or before July 2. All changes in courses must be made with the approval of the Director. For a change from one course to another, after July 2, a charge of one dollar will be made. All persons desiring to visit classes in which they are not enrolled must also obtain permission from the Director.

### MAIL SCHEDULE

Outgoing mail must be posted not later than 9:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. Mail will be ready for distribution at the following hours: 10:30 A.M. and 3:30 P.M.



### MEAL HOURS

In a day or two the regular seating plan will go into effect. There will be one seating. Please consult the chart on the dining room door to ascertain your table assignments.

#### Daily

Breakfast 7:30-8:00 A. M.  
Luncheon 12:45-1:00 P. M.  
Dinner 6:00-6:15 P. M.

#### Sunday

Breakfast 8:00-8:30 A. M.  
Dinner 1:00-1:30 P. M.  
Supper 6:00-6:30 P. M.

Since most of the waiters and waitresses are students, it is urgently requested that all students come to meals promptly, especially to breakfast, so that those who are waiting on table may be able to reach their classes on time. In the morning the door will be closed at 8:00. No students may be served breakfast after that time. Please do not ask the head waiter to make exceptions to this regulation. He has no authority to do so.

### SUPPLIES

Stationery, notebook paper, pencils, ink, etc., may be purchased at the Bookstore, post cards at the Front Desk, and cigarettes at the Snack Bar. It is impossible for credit to be extended, so please do not ask for it.

### BOOKSTORE

It is urgently requested that students purchase their texts immediately because it is frequently necessary for us to order additional copies. It is impossible to allow students to maintain charge accounts at the Bookstore, and we hope that students will cooperate by not asking for any favors of this kind. The hours when the Bookstore will be open will be announced soon.

### BREAD LOAF PARKING REGULATIONS

A preliminary notice concerning parking has been made in the bulletin. New and stringently enforced state laws prohibit the parking of cars on the side of the highway, and it is requested that students and guests endeavor to keep the roads clear in front of the Inn. Students living in Maple may park their cars in the space behind the cottage; students at Tamarack on the lawn under the trees by the main road. All others should use the parking space near the Barn.

### PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the Little Theatre at 8:15 Wednesday evening, President Stratton, Dr. Freeman, director of the Summer Schools, and Mr. Cook will speak briefly. An informal reception will be held in the Recreation Hall in the Barn directly after the preliminary meeting in the Little Theatre.

Mr. Robert Frost will give a lecture-reading at 8:15 P.M. on Monday, July 2.



## Bread Loaf and the Scholar-Teacher

June 27, 1956

R.L.Cook

"Art," says Henry James, "lives upon discussion, upon experiment, upon curiosity, upon variety of attempt, upon the exchange of views and the comparison of standpoints." I hasten to add: So does education. This evening I do not propose to discuss art except as the art of literature relates to the problem of higher education at the Bread Loaf School of English. What I shall consider is our efforts here in the light of an educational report which lately came to my attention. But the fine quotation of Henry James applies to education quite as much as it does to art, and I should say that it applies particularly in this country and at this time. Surely education, quite as much as art, lives upon discussion, experiment, curiosity, variety of attempt, upon the exchange of view and the comparison of standpoints.

Each year a considerable amount of material on education appears in my mail, and this is indicative of the Great Discussion on education that must certainly rival the Great Conversation on ideas at the University of Chicago and elsewhere. Here are experiments galore, essays indicating a curiosity in this or that aspect of the multiple problems in the field, and a good proportion of the material is inquiring. These papers sometimes want to know what we have done or what we are now doing up here on the mountain. I am led to infer by this chronic curiosity about our educational condition that many of us are self-improvers and that most of us are self-examiners. Re-evaluation seems to be a national trait and undoubtedly a very good one to encourage. When we are satisfied with ourselves we shouldn't be breathing. The angel that troubled the waters at Bethesda and the one that wrestled with Jacob at Jabbok are equally useful--the one healing and the other challenging us. Perhaps we should constantly invoke the assistance of the allaying hand to keep our discussion from rancor and our experiment from notionalism, and invoke the assistance of the arousing hand to enliven our imaginations to the possibilities in different ways of doing things and to test the soundness of the tradition to which we are attached. We must always be interested in where the fight is and what it is about and what our part in it should be. Educational isolation today is no more to be favored than its political counterpart.

So it is that only a short time ago one of the most arousing documents to reach me was a report written by F.W.Strothmann of Stanford University on behalf of a Committee of Fifteen. In the fall of 1954 the Fund for the Advancement of Education invited fifteen college and university teachers and administrators to examine our graduate schools. After a year's study the committee summed up its findings in a thirty-odd page report. Since the report is uncommonly relevant to our problems here at Bread Loaf, I am going to discuss briefly some phases of it tonight. It should clarify the adequacy of our graduate program to the needs of a foreseeable future.

The report is entitled "The Graduate School Today and Tomorrow," and is subtitled, "Reflections for the Profession's considerations." Although the Committee of Fifteen is ostensibly concerned with reviewing some "Fund-supported experiments," it really represents an exchange of memoranda on the "critical problems confronting graduate education" in our country. Of unusual interest is the common agreement among the committee members that four critical problems should be isolated for discussion.



The critical problems as tallied in the Report are in effect a bill of charges. First, the Committee is in unanimous agreement with the belief that a graduate school should not be so preoccupied with research that it fails to fulfill a function which it inherited by "a natural historical process"; a function that is described as "providing effective training for college and high school teachers." Secondly, the Committee scored a direct hit on research training. Examining this part of the graduate school program, it agreed that research training has become so devitalized it fails badly in what should be its major objective--the production of "humanely-educated men and women capable of providing the moral, intellectual, and political leadership which a free society needs if it is to survive." Thirdly, in expectation of the influx of students into graduate schools during the next few years, the Committee foresees the possibility of "a change of some kind" and, in view of the anticipated change, it considers the responsibility of the graduate school an urgent one. It must "see to it that this change will not create a chaos in which scholarship and scholarly training have become a mere memory." And lastly, the Report distinguishes carefully between scholarly training and non-scholarly teaching. In the Committee's collective opinion--and it is to be held in mind that the Committee is discussing these critical problems of the graduate schools chiefly at the college level--non-scholarly teaching "simply isn't teaching." Boldly and alertly the Report states that "the avowed purpose" of education in graduate schools is significantly, the production of more people "who are neither mere scholars nor unscholarly teachers, but scholar-teachers."

There is constant reference in the Report to "the life of the mind," "the prevailing type of dissertation," "general education," and "scholar-teachers." One sometimes gets the idea from the Report that the Committee resembles the activities at GHQ where some VIP moves colored pins rapidly over immense relief maps. Yet we all know what a difference there is between what happens at GHQ and on the fighting front. For example, here at Bread Loaf we haven't yet felt the pressure of the expected student influx. By 1960 the present college student population will have increased from 2.7 millions to 3.2 millions, and by 1970 the college student population will have reached 6.4 millions. At the college level the present 190,000 teachers--one for every thirteen students--will increase to 250,000 by 1960, and to 495,000 by 1970, if the faculty-student ratio remains the same.

When Bread Loaf does feel the influx shall we select our students on the basis of Mr. Anybody with the price of admission or Mr. Somebody who is a little short of funds? Will our policy lean toward Jefferson's "natural aristocrat," or will it incline toward the boarding-house rule of first come first served? If we decide in favor of Mr. Somebody, who is going to underwrite his education? The student himself or herself, or the United States Government, or institutional grants? If the policy of general student aid prevails, where does coddling end and personal initiative begin? If you admit anybody and everybody aren't you running smack into the egregious defect of egalitarian democracy--the tendency to depress the superior and raise the inferior; "to hold all," as Norman Foerster once contended, "to the standard of the average, the mediocre?" And if you pick only from the top of the basket, aren't you faced with another vexing problem? "Not out of those whom systems of education have exhausted their culture, comes the helpful giant to destroy the old or to build the new, but out of unhand-selled savage nature," Emerson reminds us with an appeal to a fact we all have to acknowledge. "Out of terrible Druids and Bersekers come at last Alfred and Shakespeare." In my specialization, which is American literature, there have been many more than Melville whose Yale College and Harvard is the equivalent of a whaling-ship. Paine, Irving, Whitman, Clemens, Howells, Henry James, Emily Dickinson, Edith Wharton, Dreiser, Anderson, Frost, Hemingway and Faulkner have all been more or less helpful giants and somehow each derived the equivalent of formal education in greater or lesser degree from the exigencies of his or her own experience.



These highly relevant questions have to be met, day-in and day-out. They are endemic to a graduate school's standards and continuance. And you notice how they ramify from only one of the basic problems in the Report. The Report is not, of course, programmatic; it does not tell us what we must do. It offers no blue print for education at the graduate school level. Nor is it an incendiary manifesto. It has one serious aim: to meet an immediate situation. It has a large merit; it provides a perspective on a knotty problem. It is also worth noting that it is not negative. Ultimately, in its analysis of a situation, it proposes a constructive solution in its dramatic image of the scholar-teacher.

Before we discuss the conceptual image of a scholar-teacher, let us acknowledge one further point. If education is weakened at any level all other levels suffer. Yet at one extreme we can readily conclude that there is little to worry about. The problem can be met. It is not larger than we are. It is no subtle or supernatural terror that strikes us down in the dark. Human intelligence, moral responsibility, the exercise of will and the purposeful channelling of unremitting energy ought to contain the problem. However, at the other extreme, where complacency prevails, I foresee an impending disaster that can seriously affect both our national and world-wide prestige. Invariably ineffective education leads to inferior leadership. If you concede that one of the major components in strong leadership is active critical intelligence, then you might agree with me that the Emersonian "soldieriery of dissent" is hardly nourished in fiber by a regimen of diluted educational pap.

There is a note struck in these last statements about our national and world-wide prestige that might be misleading or ambiguous. Am I advocating an educational program that aims to support a nationalistic viewpoint? I am not. I am only concerned with what might happen if our education at any level fails in its task to produce a tough-minded, inquiring citizenry. The image that flashes to my mind when I think of nationalistic education is one of iron filings lined up on a highly charged magnetic field, each filing responding to the subtle force that induces the magnetism. Or the image of people, feckless and misled, following heedlessly to destruction the piping of some errant demagogue. Here at Bread Loaf a far different image should form in our mind. When literature is functioning vitally it is opening--and man is discovering--the means to reality. We ought to be, as Arnold says, "experiencing the power of so dealing with things as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them and of our relation with them." For instance, poetry is something to which I am related, something for which I have an affinity, and it is constantly, when I am alive to it, opening a path between reality and the soul. And isn't this what should be happening all down the line--not only in our discoveries about poetry but in our relationship to the world of science and religion, to the envisioning of the good society in history, and in our relationship to all other areas of human or natural knowledge? Education is only in part a live option on the funded wisdom of mankind as we find it in books. It is also partly realized by the personal discoveries on frontiers that expand like that most wonderful of all figures--the circle. It is worth reminding ourselves that when Ernest Hemingway acknowledged the Nobel Award, he wrote: "For a true writer, each book should be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment... It is because we have had such great writers in the past that a writer is driven far out past where he can go, out to where no one can help him." It is the spirit of this outward reaching that appeals, and this is the spirit of the tough-minded inquirer in literature.

The spirit of tough-minded inquiry is variously identified. In its relationship to this problem of leadership and education, I find it clarified in Sinclair Lewis' novel of the thirties--It Can't Happen Here. The novel is a story of Doremus Jessup, who is said to represent a former editor of the Rutland (Vt.) Herald, who is caught in the crossfire of fascism, which he denounces, and communism, which he deprecates. The tyranny in each way of life equally dismays him because what he stands for



is what we have been describing. In Lewis's novel it is called "the free, inquiring, critical spirit," and the preservation of this spirit seems to Doremus Jessup "more important than any social system whatsoever." He knows that both "the men of ritual," who are the fascists, and the men of barbarism, who are the communists, are "capable of shutting up the men of science and of silencing them forever." Tyranny, Lewis suggests in his admirable imaginative analysis, is protean. It can appear in an institution's special privilege, in unthinking imitation, in village mediocrity, in the gregarious herd, and it is to this tyranny that he opposes a belief in "the free, inquiring, critical spirit." This is all I mean by my reference to the disaster that could seriously affect our nationwide as well as our worldwide prestige. This is all I mean and it is pretty much everything I mean. Ditch this in education and what have you got left to be proud of in the human condition?

2.

A few minutes ago we noted the Report of the Committee of Fifteen recommended that the graduate schools stress (1) effective training for college and high school teachers; (2) writing readable pieces of research; (3) holding the line by refusing neither to lessen the importance of scholarship nor by minimizing the importance of scholarly teaching; and finally (4) to produce scholar-teachers. The latter is the hero of this pedagogical report; the scholar-teachers' coevals and sometimes antagonists are the mere scholars and/or the unscholarly teacher.

In the humanities the scholar became 'merely' a scholar in the last century when he began to compete with the scholars in the natural sciences, and in the competition fell "a delicate prey" to the "over-evaluation of mere factual information." The motto of the mere scholar is similar to the one that Dreiser as a young cub reporter saw hanging from the wall in the editorial office of the Chicago Tribune. It read: "Exactitude! Exactitude! Exactitude! Who? What? When? How? The Facts! The Color! The Facts!" The image of the mere scholar is familiar; he is to be seen curled "in the window seat/ Behind the Encyclopedia Britannica." Like hunting spiders, the scholarly exegetes pounce upon their prey, paralyzing the living tissue so that other hungry little spiders can feed freshly.

What of the unscholarly teacher? The charge against him is quite as formidable. The preferred charges are inexactness, limitation in knowledge, failure in self-discipline. In this over-simplification his defects are an inversion of the virtues of the mere scholar who is thought to be exact, knowledgeable, disciplined. In the Calvinist scheme of things, you will remember, innocent children who died in infancy were still always accorded "the easiest room in hell." In the academic scheme of things, the Committee of Fifteen would undoubtedly not deprive the unscholarly teacher of this moderate dispensation in education's Inferno. For, like the little infants in Michael Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom," the unscholarly teacher is only innocent. In the classroom he is no more dangerous than the next person whose words tumble wantonly in the haystack of literary pleasure. He affronts the mere scholar, turning to him and demanding scornfully as Armado of Moth: "Define, define, well-educated infant." As for himself, like Mock Turtle, the unscholarly teacher only took the prescribed course in the teacher's training program: "Reeling and writhing, of course, to begin with - and then the different branches of arithmetic - Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision." Why should the unscholarly teacher have any responsibility who has never been disciplined in the exactness of literature?

Which leads to the entrance of our hero--the scholar-teacher--in this little pedagogical drama. Fortunately the Committee of Fifteen do not try to give us the specifications by which we can turn out the authentic article on the lathe of the graduate school. Nor yet is he like Paul Fry a disembodied wraith. "We mean." says



the Committee, "we mean by scholar-teacher not merely someone who has stored special knowledge. We mean somebody who, with the help of the solid information he has gained by uncompromising research, can help the next generation to find out where they came from, what they are, and where they want to go." In effect, the scholar-teacher is only partly like the attendants in the information booth at Grand Central Station--a repository of special knowledge. He is also a stimulator like John Dos Passos' line picture of Thorstein Veblen's father--"a tough whetstone for the sharpening steel of young Thorstein's wits." To mix our metaphor with complete abandon, the scholar-teacher is at once an ever-normal granary of ideas and a tough whetstone for sharpening mental steel. He represents, as the compound implies, the integration of dual capacities. So much for the conceptual image of our hero--the scholar-teacher.

3.

The question is, is the scholar-teacher going to lead us out of the wilderness of educational chaos into the promised land of educational reform? Or is he destined to spend his time on Pisgah envisioning a theoretical educational utopia? Which will it be? Will it be: "I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon?" Or will it be: "Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over the Jordan?" Which will it be--over the river or up into the mountain?

I expect the simple message of Moses when he spoke to his people has taken effect. You must first lift up your eyes and survey the lay of the land and get a Pisgah view before you can cross over the Jordan. And why not? Do you remember how it was with young Ike McCaslin in Faulkner's "The Bear?" How under the tutelage of his mentor Sam Fathers, son of a Negro slave and a Chickasaw Chief, Ike was initiated into "the long challenge and the long chase" until he "had learned humility through suffering and learned pride through the endurance which survived the suffering"; how, as "a child, alien and lost in the green and soaring gloom of the marked wilderness," he surrendered completely to it and then found his way out, consummating his initiation and quest in the realization that he was "not held fast in earth but free in earth and not in earth but of earth?"

I expect this is what the Committee of Fifteen is implying when they refer to what graduate schools ought to be: "centers of culture and citadels of free inquiry in a free society." Because before you have a center of culture or a citadel of free inquiry you must lift up your eyes and take a Pisgah view; you must first be worthy of the freedom that a free society exalts. Before you have a right to that freedom you must, like Ike McCaslin, have learned humility through the discipline of your field and pride through the endurance which survived the discipline. When inquiry in the free society is directional, freedom itself takes on meaning. A freedom earned is not apt to be a freedom lightly abandoned, neglected or relinquished. The longer we live the more aware we are that this is not only a world in which we have been prime choosers. It is also a world of moral and intellectual accountability (a world in which, as Joseph Conrad says, the only thing a man can betray in his conscience). Any graduate school worthy of the name should hold up before its students this kind of conscientious accountability. An imaginative approach to the M.A. degree must not avoid an emphasis on the disciplinary aspect. The levy on any good performance is a self-discipline.

Yet if we are to have real scholar-teachers, there must be more than self-discipline. In the field common to our interest, there must be the love of letters. Not a love of letters in the passive sense solely, of a relaxed enjoyment, but a love of letters in the sense of active recreation. One of the fine things the no longer new New Criticism did for us was to make us see the importance of reading the



page closely but imaginatively. If the New Critics tended at times in practice to make every bush--green or sere--burn, nevertheless they renewed in us the sense that metaphoric language implies a logic of identity, and that detecting the relevance in apparently disparate things is a vivid and reanimating experience. So we commonly say the garden of the mind, or the furniture of the world, or the climate of opinion, as we detect a correlative identity. This metaphoric habit expands our horizon as it conjures the each in the all, or enables us to say with Dylan Thomas, "This bread I break was once the oat." And when perception is heightened we see lambs frolicking in the field, as did Gerard Manley Hopkins, and we say, "it was as though it was the ground that tossed them." Or, like the long-suffering Fool in Lear, when our point of view is rejected, we can remind our fellowmen in a laconic metaphor, "Truth's a dog must to kennel."

When the scholar-teacher adds imagination to discipline, I should think the exponent of the love of letters had a solid basis. But surely he should have more than this for I would appeal to the teacher within the scholar and to the man within the teacher. I have noticed how sharply some of the modern novelists have concerned themselves, not with the larger and more ambiguous theme expressed in the Miltonic justification of the ways of God to man but with the smaller yet more intimate effort in trying to understand the ways of man with man; James Gould Cozzmes, for example. And the interest today in unoriginal sin may possibly be more helpful in the long run than the Calvinistic obsession with the hereditary guilt of old Adam. Of course it must always be the nature and destiny of man that fascinates the scholar-teacher. My point here is simply that education is a continuous coming to terms with human knowledge on successive planes of personal awareness. In the courses we teach we aim to communicate what is living in the past so that the circulation of ideas in society today is uninterrupted. I have not however, noticed that students' foreheads grow lined in anguish over old Adam's defection, yet I have noticed the effect of the derelictions and perfidies of Dos Passos' characters in U S A on college students. As one student recently said to my colleague and myself of the modern American novelists--Dos Passos, Faulkner, Hemingway, Warren, et al--in a General Examinations Oral: "They mean a lot to us young people."

What more should this scholar-teacher possess in his own right in addition to self-discipline and imagination? To illustrate my last point I'm going to reach into the present day Orient from which to draw an illustration, not from literature but from the allied field of art.

One day during the Occupation of Japan--about 1949--two American soldiers wandered into a narrow winding gravel street at Atami, a popular seaside resort two hours from Tokyo, and, there before them, spread out on a table of crushed ice in front of a small simple fish market was an object they could not identify. They tried to communicate with the shopkeeper but he did not understand English. Among the customers was an old undistinguished-looking man, standing by with his purchase wrapped in a small package. He noticed the baffled soldiers and, approaching them, motioned for them to wait. He took a piece of the store's wrapping paper, borrowed the brush with which the storekeeper kept his accounts and drew with very rapid strokes a picture of an octopus that came vividly to life under the old man's stroke. Then, when the soldiers recognized the octopus, the old man added a tiny squid with ten tentacles, and pointed to the slice of it on display. One of the soldiers started to pick up the paper, bowing and thanking the old man, but he took the picture back and amused, signed it--Yokoyama Taikau, the eighty-seven year old master of the traditional, impressionistic line whose reputation in Japan is comparable to that of Picasso or Matisse in the Western World. I do not refer to this actual story because Yokoyama's pictures are much sought after. I refer to it as an example of one of the most appealing characteristics of the artist in whatever form



we find him--his informed spontaneity, and this, too, should be part of the scholar-teacher's equipment. The scholar-teacher infects by the passionate absorption with his materials. In this little anecdote of Yokoyama, the eighty-seven year old Japanese painter whose brush is so expressive that it speaks for him, and the two American soldiers, I detect another little lesson; it is the lesson of universal communicability by the means of art. For the scholar-teacher, the word, even as line and color, is also potentially a great solvent of cultural solidarity.

On Mr. Joseph Battell's mountain pitch for thirty-seven years Middlebury College's venture in graduate school education in the field of literature has, and I say it with neither smugness nor yet with disdain of other schools, give an object lesson in higher education. Here we have equipped scholar-teachers for a defense in cultural depth. Here you will find the encouragement of self-discipline, a chance to exercise imagination, and a belief in spontaneity of effort in teaching, writing, reading, and in the dramatic and critical skills. And here also we make it very clear what it is we are defending; it is the right of man to the freedom of his intellectual adventuring. Middlebury College in this important contribution to higher learning gives us a rare chance to produce scholar-teachers in the great and continuing tradition of literature, and to stimulate those non-teachers among you whose attributes and interests are yet those of scholar-teachers.



Seniors

1956 (10)

Campbell, Beryl, President

Crosby, Alene Maude

Davis, Doris Charrier

Earle, John Milton

Fuller, Thomas Vaughn

Greenawalt, Jane Elizabeth

Haidukewicz, Robert

Kroetsch, Robert Paul

Waldron, Raymond Arthur

Withington, Frederic Burnham



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BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH  
1956  
General Statistics

Student attendance by states:  
(according to school address)

California	3
Connecticut	11
Distr. of Col.	1
Illinois	7
Indiana	3
Iowa	4
Maine	1
Maryland	4
Massachusetts	10
Michigan	2
Missouri	4
New Hampshire	2
New Jersey	7
New York	20
Ohio	5
Oklahoma	1
Pennsylvania	9
Rhode Island	2
No. Carolina	4
So. Carolina	1
Texas	3
Vermont	3
Virginia	5
Wisconsin	3
Canada	3
Italy	1
Peru	1
Puerto Rico	1
West Indies	1

(24 states represented)

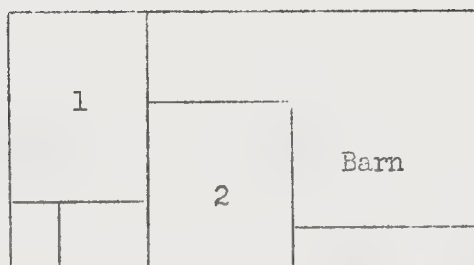
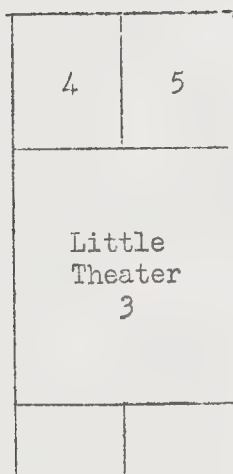
Total student attendance	122
Men students	39
Women students	83
Old students	58
New students	64
Graduated post-1945 (c75%)	88
Graduated pre-1945	34
Off-campus students	10
Candidates for a Midd. M.A.	72 (59%)
Scholarship students	8
Seniors	10
Prospective 1957 seniors	18
Veterans	5
Auditors	16
Working for 8 credits	9
Working for 7 credits	6
" " 6 "	70
" " 5 "	4
" " 4 "	16
" " 2 "	1

Attendance by courses:

Play Directing	10
Victorian Poetry	8
English Romanticism	41
The Art of Fiction	45
Shakespeare	28
English Satire	18
The Modern Short Story	31
British & American Ballads	12
Six Major American Novels	24
Seventeenth Century Literature	20
Metaphor, Symbol, and Myth	31
The Renaissance and Spenser	10
American Literature Since 1890	31



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES  
1956



8:30 A.M.

53	Metaphor, Symbol and Myth	Mr. Davis	Little Theater 3
46	Seventeenth Century Literature	Mr. Joyce	Barn 2
33	English Satire	Mr. Baker	Barn 1
40	British and American Ballads	Mr. Davidson	Little Theater 5

9:30 A.M.

79	The Renaissance and Spenser	Mr. Kelley	Little Theater 5
21	The Art of Fiction	Miss Drew	Little Theater 3
92	American Literature since 1890	Mr. Brown	Barn 1

10:30 A.M.

39	The Modern Short Story	Mr. Davis	Barn 2
10	Victorian Poetry	Mr. Joyce	Little Theater 5
11	English Romanticism	Mr. Baker	Little Theater 3

11:30 A.M.

7a	Play Directing	Mr. Volkert	Little Theater 3
28	Shakespeare	Mr. Kelley	Barn 2
41	Six Major American Novels	Mr. Brown	Barn 1



Bread Loaf School of English

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

August 11, 1956

Donald Davidson

Robert Louis Stevenson is reported to have said "that one's first tropical landfall touches a virginity of sense." Stevenson was speaking of the magical islands of the South Pacific, which most of us have never seen. But we can guess what Stevenson meant, for all of us here have made, some time in the past, our first trip to Bread Loaf.

To make the turn on U.S. 7 (if we come that way), to cross the bridge at East Middlebury, to thread the winding road up Ripton Gorge, to come at last to this upland valley with mountains close around and a friendly porch, flanked by giant spruce trees, for a landing stage--that also touches a virginity of the sense. No matter how many times repeated, summer by summer, it remains a miracle. It is a miracle of restoration to what I would call one's true being, one's all but lost identity.

The world being what it is, it may happen that we never knew, for sure, just who we rightly were--until we came to Bread Loaf. Wherever we were before, whatever we amounted to, we felt the thrust of anonymous hands pressing us always down, down, into the indifferent plane of ciphers and abstract equations that is the modern regime. However rebellious, however resistant and unconsenting we may have been, we had the impression that we were being whittled at by some kind of pit and pendulum torture, or sliced away by the Chinese death of a thousand slices, until at last nothing would be left of us but a social security number.

Pale and shaken, we arrive at Bread Loaf. Nine months and more we have battled in the endless artificial caverns of modern education. Battled against



whom? Battled for what? We hardly know. In the child-centered school or the youth-centered college it is hard to guess where we stand with respect to the curious circle of which the educational geometricians have fixed the center. Are we the radius of the circle? Or the circumference? Or are we only tangents that hit the circumference at one point--and then skid off into space?

Are we battling with the ignorance of youth, which we are repeatedly assured is a conquerable thing? Or do we have to break off that fight and face around to battle the parachute troopers of progressive education who, returning buoyantly from an uplifting world-conference at Paris, Delhi, or Honolulu, have suddenly dropped a couple of divisions of airborne program-planners upon our own educational headquarters? Their knowing expertism, well provisioned by UNESCO, or the private foundations, or the government chests that our tax moneys have filled, is much more formidable than the ignorance of youth.

It is a baffling problem to find out how to achieve a "world view" of what happens to grammar, spelling, and punctuation when Minnie Moonface, in one's own ninth-grade class room, takes pen in hand to write. And even though teen-ager Nathan Nitwit has received "child guidance," and been submitted to psychological therapeutics, and, as a last resort, upon the recommendation of the consultant in remedial reading, been fitted with Nu-View spectacles--still, still, alas, he stubbornly, lumpishly remains Nathan Nitwit.

But that is not something you can put on his report card. Nor do you feel like saying outright to Principal Super-Efficiency that, in the case of Nathan Nitwit, the democratic process has simply, flatly, utterly collapsed.

It is true that there is Susan Sharp--a promising child! And Sammy Smart--that wonderful boy, with the eyes and mind of a poet. What a shame that they have to be lock-stepped to the dragfoot-pace of the Minnie Moonfaces and the Nathan Nitwits! "If I could only do something about them," says Teacher Su-



preme Patience to herself. "If I could only get them to read a book through, for instance--just once." But Susan Sharp is always dated up for drum-major-ette drill, or something of that kind. And Sammy Smart is tootling a hot clarinet in the band if he is not editing that ridiculously adolescent high school news-sheet or helping run the affairs of the Ringtum Phi fraternity.

And furthermore, since the new curriculum survey, conducted last autumn by a team of experts from Teachers College, has resulted in several workshop conferences and a new curriculum plan, which the state authorities have ordered to be "instrumented," and since this-here new curriculum plan, as Principal Super-Efficiency has just pointed out to his teaching staff, calls for all English studies to conform to their new classification--namely, "Language Arts"--Miss Supreme Patience must pretty soon file her own little plan for Shakespeare and American literature. Somehow she cannot imagine what she is going to do, under the heading of "Language Arts," with Banquo's ghost and the midnight ride of Paul Revere.

But that does not matter at the moment, because, as soon as she has doctored up a script that Jimmy Jerk has composed for Senior Stunt Night, she must run over to the Parent-Teachers meeting and give a sweet little talk on "Social Values in the Teaching of English." Well, as to that talk, Miss Supreme Patience knows at least one thing she must do. Principal Super-Efficiency will be at that meeting, and he will expect it of her. Every time Principal Super-Efficiency goes off to a conference or convention, he comes back with a new word. In that way he learns five or six new words every year. What is the Principal's new word for April-May? It isn't value-pattern, it isn't community-minded, and it isn't cultural factor. Ah, yes, it's here on the mimeographed sheet. Awareness. All she has to do at the PTA meeting is to get up and say, awareness . . . awareness . . . awareness. Then everything will be all right.



But--if I may borrow another one of Principal Super-Efficiency's new words--the "end-result" of all this is--well, I will put it in plain English, to which I am more accustomed--it is a hellishly shattering experience for our dear friend, Miss Supreme Patience.

And so for us all; for it is an experience that, in some form or other, none of us can escape.

Stunned by industrial noises, stupefied by industrial fumes, numb with the mass-pressure of crowds, dazed by artificial light, dizzyed by telephone calls, walkie-talkies, office buzzers, electric bells, sound-trucks, police sirens, fire-gongs, air-raid signals, diesel-motored trucks, motorized scooters, motorized lawn-mowers, motorized tree-chewers, chain-saws, dish-washers, floor-waxers--to say nothing of jet planes breaking the sound barrier--with all that beating upon us, day and night, we have no virginity of sense left. In our darker moments, with 150 papers to grade on the precise date when the income tax return is due, and a taxicab strike is called on the very morning when the high-priced automobile fails to start, we are ready to echo Thomas Wolfe's plaintive cry: Lost! Lost! Lost! Lost!

We have signed on the dotted line so many times that our own signature seems like a practiced forgery. We have lost track of our true identity, our real self. Abstract stimulus--abstract response. That is what remains of the creature. At night we can remember only this: to be sure to set the alarm clock before we take our pheno-barbitol. And 1984, perhaps, is just around the corner.

But in our brighter, or at least our more lucid and indignant moments, we figure out what is wrong. Somehow or other Society has been voted into precedence over the Individual, and we are all commanded to get busy for the benefit of Society, which now must rule. But Society (if there really is such a thing)



is a result of something or other; it is not a prime generative cause of anything. People as individuals do have sense. Society in its collective mass has no sense whatever--though indeed it may have the sort of low-grade intelligence which our social scientist friends, in their least romantic moments, are pleased to call "social psychology." Quite evidently Society, though now in command, does not know what to do. All it can think of is to organize itself to death. Logical ingenuity, applied to the shibboleth of organization, has reached the point of diminishing returns. Like the automobile traffic, it is getting in its own way.

And that is why we come to Bread Loaf, I think--to get out of the way of all that is getting in its own way--and in our way. Or more specifically to rediscover that virginity of the sense that will lift us forever out of the class of institutionalized baby-sitters and brain-washers.

One evening near the Schoolhouse I met a Bread Loaf student returning from his walk up the road. Not Miss Supreme Patience, this time, but Mr. Faithful Scholar, transfigured. "Ever since I came to Bread Loaf," he said, "I have been trying to find the right words to describe the colors on the mountains." His statement seemed almost a question. I let the mountains answer him. If he could hear the mountains talking--and I thought he could--there was no need for me to speak. If he could not hear them, what use would my words be?

The mountain light, coursing from Middlebury Gap to the Adirondacks, falls on the pages of our books with an illumination that is not given to many to enjoy. We are among the few who can rightfully exult to say: "If you would understand this book, look at that mountain." We have renounced the company of those, so lamentably stockaded, who work under a colder light and know only how to say: "If you would understand a mountain, look at this book."



Ours is the oldest tradition of education in the Western World. At a time-distance of two and a half millenia, we return to the true original of Plato's Academy where, as at Bread Loaf now, good walkers and good talkers sought the grove together. I can imagine that Plato's students, like ours, were lectured by the crows as well as by the master. A distant cawing in the tamaracks makes an excellent gloss on Shakespeare or Chaucer or an old Ballad. A wandering bee in the class-room, an attentive swallow on the porch, may give us rightful leave to wonder why William Butler Yeats changed his style.

Twenty-five years ago I came to Bread Loaf, a stranger, and began to study my lesson with the aid of the mountain and the brook. Perhaps I have still only partly learned it after all these years, but the part I first learned is well memorized. That was the summer of the fire which swept away the class-rooms along with the icehouse and much more. The faculty, then, met their classes in the sitting-rooms of the various cottages, and I taught, or essayed to teach, my first Bread Loaf class in Treman Cottage. The class were seated in an odd collection of chairs that ranged from Victorian plush to prim, uncurving, right-angled Puritan. And I, confronting them, must somehow expound the poetry of Wordsworth, with my book on my lap, and on the book my notes that had suddenly grown cold, quite cold.

It was then I realized that I had some faculty colleagues not listed in our Bread Loaf catalogue. On my left in the meadow an ancient family of crows asserted from time to time their hereditary right to engage in instruction. At my back, the wings of chimney swifts at any moment might thunder commentary. On the road the clomp of horses' hoofs and the creak of hay-wagon-wheels supplied items of bibliography not found in the English Romantic Poets textbook. All these were sounds, but not noises. There is a difference.

Furthermore, from sundry rustlings and creakings on my right hand I might guess that I had an unseen audience of distinguished eavesdroppers on the stair-



way: our dear friend Mrs. Gay, the director's wife and her daughter Dot Gay, with perhaps my own wife and our twelve-year-old daughter Mary. Before the hour's end I would hear a step on the west porch and see Walter Prichard Eaton arriving contemplatively, pipe in hand--for his was the next class, and he frequently came early to take a sample of the current discourse. If I had said anything at all that connected up with New England fauna and flora, or practical theater, or any other of his wide and numerous interests, I would have his sound Eatonian admonition by noon-time, to salt my lunch with.

Under these circumstances, dear Bread Loaf friends, I very soon learned, as you have all learned, that cloistered pseudo-Gothic solitude, cubic feet of air-filtered space, functionally architected and posture chairs arranged on plastic floors, actually are not necessary for education. Long ago, when I was an undergraduate at Vanderbilt University, our reverend Dean of the School of Religion, used often to exhort us hungry limbs of Satan in this wise at daily twelve o'clock chapel: "Young men, you are surrounded by clouds of witnesses--clouds of witnesses!" At Bread Loaf, indeed, I was surrounded by clouds of witnesses, and at long last knew what the good Dean meant.

The Bread Loaf catalogue, groping desperately for the right phrase, used to try to say it this way: "Bread Loaf is a School, a Farm, and an Inn." The statement, though true, must have seemed cryptic to the uninitiated.

Only in poetry can it be said rightly. And it is all in the famous poem, "Expostulation and Reply," which William Wordsworth composed about the time Middlebury College was founded, for the Bread Loaf School of English, and most especially for the members of every graduating class. You will remember that in the poem William is seated on a Vermont boulder, with his book in his lap, not studying, but just looking around as if born to no purpose; and his Bread Loaf instructor comes along--on his way to the croquet lawn or the trout stream--



and, with his tongue in his cheek, asks William this question: "Why aren't you studying?"

And William, a true Bread Loafer, of course knows the answer. Without hesitation he replies in perfect Green Mountain iambic tetrameter:

"The eye, it cannot choose but see;  
We cannot bid the ear be still.  
Our bodies feel where'er we be,  
Against or with our will."

No thumbing-over of Locke or Hartley will ever explain those lines to you, unless you have also sat in a Bread Loaf class-room, adjacent to a meadow with a boulder in it--or sat on the boulder itself.

Education is not an abstract specialty. It cannot be reduced to a laboratory experiment. It has immeasurable proportions for which no psychologist can plot a curve. Like art it deals in particulars, but never in particulars severed from the whole. Like art it includes all of everything--or else is nothing.

Our books at Bread Loaf must bear the light of day, or else have only book-meaning. What goes into our lessons lies, more often than not, beyond the margins of the pages we read. Master and pupil we may be in this our mountain retreat, but not professor and student as professors and students are classified in the over-institutionalized machinery of mass education. If we inherit and practice the tradition of Plato's Academy, we also affirm the good Americanism of the saying that a college consists of Mark Hopkins--or Moses Waddell--or "Doc" Cook--on one end of a log and a student on the other. And that student, after a week or so at Bread Loaf, no longer pale and shaken, is also no longer just a student. The people who are just students attend what Bishop Fulton Sheen has called pluri-versities, because those institutions have broken what should be a unity into haphazard accumulations of pluralities, all at war with



one another; but we at Bread Loaf are a uni-versity, under the Bishop's definition, so far as we succeed in joining the many into one. It is only at such a uni-versity that professor and student can fully emerge as persons, who may practice the education of nature as well as the education of books and balance the "wise passiveness" recommended by Wordsworth against the mad activity of the merely rational world.

Members of the Graduating Class, you well know and will always remember our procession of days that reaches backward from this crowning day of your studious and unstudious pursuits through the summers you have seen wax and wane--back to the day when Bread Loaf first touched your virginity of sense and you picked up a mountain tied in mist-ribbons along with your new-purchased books. Back of the procession of days that you know firsthand are other days that others have known. You take them, perforce, at secondhand. But where memory of an alma mater is concerned secondhand is no cheapening but rather enrichment. And so, among the rights and privileges to which your diploma will entitle you are, I would say, to add the memory of Joseph Battell to your more immediate memories; and to go back to the time when, by a happy stroke of genius, Middlebury College decided to use Mr. Battell's bequest to found here a uni-versity called Bread Loaf School of English. To Middlebury College--its trustees, executive officers, faculty, and staff--we owe a debt of gratitude and allegiance that is sealed but by no means ended with this ceremonious occasion. If I could add my own procession of days to yours, I could readily bring before you names and faces that have meant much to me, as to other members of Bread Loaf; of my first years at Bread Loaf, for example, Dr. Wright and Dr. Harrington of the Middlebury faculty; the directors of the School--Robert M. Gay, Harry Owen, our own Hewette Joyce during the difficult war years, and our noble friend Reginald Cook in the momentous and gracious present; the faculty colleagues of our various sessions; the remembered student friends of many summers. And along with them, the friends,



neighbors, and patrons of the School--the Scott family, the Brooks family, the Upsons, the Morrisons, the Reicherts, the people of Ripton, the people of Vermont; and then above all, the man who in our minds stands as Godfather to all those newly christened of Bread Loaf as alma mater--our revered friend and master-teacher, Robert Frost.

For myself, as one who began the Bread Loaf experience in 1931, I wish to own, here and now, my warm sense of the privilege I have shared, with this class and previous classes, in being a member of this book-and-mountain university; and I wish to express my staunch admiration not only for the founders of the past, but also for those of the present--President Stratton, Dr. Freeman, Mr. Hadley, Professor Cook, and all those of Middlebury College and the Bread Loaf staff who with thoughtful devotion have maintained the tradition I have endeavored to describe.

A procession of days, such as we know at Bread Loaf, is not to be measured in time. Count it in friends, members of the Graduating Class. Measure it in poetry. Weight it in stories. Tune it in songs. It cannot pass away. Read it into the lines of the poem that you know not only by the book, but best of all from the lips and voice of the poet who made it. You might have taken many other roads, Members of the Graduating Class. But you took this one--up Ripton Gorge to Bread Loaf. You can say it with me tonight--

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I---  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference."

And one difference is that for us who come to Bread Loaf and go away remembering Bread Loaf, it is always--always--summertime.